Paddy Crop affected by Brown Plant Hopper in Karnataka

1111. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
DR. SHYAM SUNDAR MOHAPATRA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the acreage of paddy crop in Karnataka recently affected by brown plant hopper;

(b) what has been the production losses as result thereof;

(c) what steps have been taken to contain the disease;

(d) whether any relief has been provided to the affected farmers; and

(e) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) An area of about 43,000 hectares under summer paddy crop in Karnataka State was reportedly affected by Brown Plant Hopper.

(b) The production losses have not been fully estimated. However, for the district of Shimoga, it is reported to be approx. 19,000 Mts.

(c) The steps taken to contain the pest included education to farmers about suitable control measures through various mass-media techniques, ensuring adequate supply of pesticides, providing subsidy towards the cost of pesticides, etc.

(d) The State Government is reported to have spent an amount of Rs. 26.18 lakhs towards the cost of pesticides for free distribution of pesticides to small and marginal farmers. Besides a subsidy of Rs. 7.89 lakhs towards 50 per cent cost of pesticdies has been provided to other farmers to undertake control operations in the affected areas.

(e) Question does not arise.

Government help to Small and Medium Newspapers

1112. SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state what steps Government have taken or are taking to help the growth of small and medium newspapers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL): A statement giving details of facilities extended to 'small' and 'medium' newspapers at present is enclosed.

Statement

FACILITIES EXTENDED TO 'SMAL' AND 'MEDIUM' NEWSPAPERS

(A) *Facility extended by Press Registrar:*

The Newsprint Allocation policy for the year 1985-86 is yet to be formulated. However, under the policy of 1984-85, the following facilities were available to them:

(i) Newsprint is supplied in sheets to the newspapers which are printed on sheetfed machines. In case, where sheets are not available, an additional 5 per cent of their entitlement is given to them for conversion of reels into sheets;

(ii) The newspapers with entitlement less than 300 M.T. were given the option to obtain imported or indigenous newsprint either in part or in full;

(iii) The validity period of authorisation for newspapers where entitlement was upto 50 tonnes was six months as against three months in the case of others. This concession enables a large majority of

small newspapers to draw newsprint in a convenient and phased manner;

(iv) Small newspapers with a circulation upto, 2,000 copies are *not required to give chartered accountant's certificate* while applying for allotment of newsprint;

(v) Small newspapers with a circulation upto 5,000 copies were given allowance of 10 to 20 per cent of copies distributed free, returned, unsold or printed but neither sold or distributed free, while calculating their entitlement of newsprint, *and 10 to 15 per cent for newspapers* with circulation between 5,000 copies and 10,000 copies. In the case of others, the percentage is 5 to 10 only;

(vi) The Government was charging customs duty at the rate of Rs. 825 per metric tonnes of imported variety of newsprint. Whereas small newspapers were totally *exempted from payment of customs* duty, medium newspapers were required to pay the customs duty at the rate of Rs. 275 per metric tonne only. However, as a result of an interim decision of the Supreme Court, the big newspapers are at present being charged customs duty at the rate of Rs. 550 per metric tonne on a provisional basis.

(B) *Facilities extended by the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity:*

Under the existing Advertising Policy of the Government of India, the following facilities have been extended to language newspapers etc. in general and 'small' and 'medium' newspapers in particular:—

(i) the general eligibility requirement of paid circulation is 1,000 copies per issue. Relaxation is, however, permissible in the case of the following:

(a) Specialised|scientific|technical journals with a paid circulation of 500 copies per issue;

(b) Sanskrit newspaper|journals and newspapers|journals *published in backward*, border or remote areas or in tribal languages or primarily meant for tribals readers, with a minimum paid circulation of 500 copies per issue.

(ii) In the matter of print areas also relaxation is permissible to newspapers|journals published in tribal languages or primarily meant for tribal readership.

(iii) newspapers|journals with paid circulation upto 2,000 copies are exempted from the requirement of submitting certificate of circulation from a chartered accountant etc.

(iv) there is parity of rates in the matter of fixing advertisement rates; i.e. no discrimination is made between the English newspapers and the language newspapers. However, language papers|periodicals upto a circulation of 10,000 copies enjoy a higher basic rate than their counterparts in English. A large number of small papers|periodicals borne on DAVP Media List fall in this category.

(C) *Facilities extended by Press Information Bureau:*

Press Information Bureau extends from time to time a number of services pertaining to release of news, photos etc. apart from giving special representation to 'small' and 'medium' newspapers in the conducted tours organised by them with a view to have these newspapers first-hand knowledge of developmental activities in different parts of the country. Accreditation Rules have also been liberalised to extend greater facilities to 'small' and 'medium' newspapers.